

CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY

July 28, 2021
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Video-Conference

MINUTES

Attendees: Judge Sanchez-Figueroa (Chair); Isabel Alvarez, Troy Brown, Samuel Bruder, Sandra Cardone, Lia Cestaro, Patrick (PJ) Deak, Brian Hill, Zarin Kapur, Meghan Korn, Philip Strambler, Spiro Uyar, and Shawna Woodard

Absent: Chief Justice Richard A. Robinson (Chairman Emeritus), Juana Brown, Cristina Johnson, Esther Harris, Daisy Ortiz, Michaelangelo Palmieri, Felix Rodriguez, and Ewa Wojewodzki

Judge Sanchez-Figueroa called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

The minutes from the May 19, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved with the necessary corrections.

GAL Training Update

Zarin Kapur reported that the training went well. They trained over 30 new Guardians ad Litem. Shawna will forward the course evaluations to the committee for their review. A discussion ensued about the time of day our program was scheduled and the challenges faced trying to engage learners through a virtual platform.

Diversity Week 2021 Update

Sandra Cardone shared some exciting updates that included the confirmed keynote speaker and workshop presenters. All have agreed to present pro bono. The Subcommittee is working on the artwork for the Save the Date and to market the upcoming event. We will engage the Branch's grants administrator to find possible funding sources for Diversity Week 2022.

ACCC Culture Matters Video – Requests for Use

The members discussed the acceptable use of the Culture Matters video given the release forms that were signed by the video's actors. The Employee Education and Development Unit requested to use the videos for a Branchwide training program they intend to develop. Judge Sanchez-Figueroa and the membership agreed to a standard request process that would include a form to obtain certain information about the course and the opportunity to vet it. Shawna will contact Middlesex Community College to discuss the actors' release forms, particularly the release for the actor who limited our use of the video. We must also identify which actor limited our use. She will also contact Legal Services to confirm the acceptable audience per the release, particularly if Judicial Branch interns are included. Judge Sanchez-Figueroa requested that this item be on the agenda for the next ACCC meeting.

Continued Discussion on Gender Identity

In the Judicial Branch workplace, cross-gender pat-down searches, urine collection, and the like, are restricted. The ACCC discussed the need for a Judicial Branch policy that would address how a transgender employee would perform the same job consistent with their gender identity. A Subcommittee was established to learn more about this matter. Lia Cestaro will lead the Subcommittee that includes Brian Hill, PJ Deak, Zarin Kapur, Sandra Cardone, Troy Brown, Isabel Alvarez, and Meghan Korn. Brian will contact Judicial Marshal Services to see if they currently have a policy on the matter. Lia shared a link to a web-based course she advised

everyone take to learn more information about the topic. Lia will also republish the course for the web so that it may be shared with Judge Sanchez-Figueroa.

New Business

None

Announcements

Judge Sanchez-Figueroa thanked Felix Rodriguez for his dedication to the Judicial Branch Advisory Committee on Cultural Competency and wished him well in his new position. Troy will secure a template for a certificate of appreciation that we may send to Felix and to Juanita Halepas who also recently left the Branch and the ACCC.

Troy announced:

- Hispanic Heritage Month is coming up soon.
- Troy and Lia have done their third session of Candid Conversations about Racial and Ethnic Disparities with juvenile detention officers. The conversations went very well and the feedback they received has been largely glowing. We should consider offering this course Branchwide.

The meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.